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INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

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COUNTRY Korea

DATE DISTR. 25 September 1952

SUBJECT General Economic Conditions in P'yongyang

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Living Conditions and Government Controls¹

1. On 1 January 1952 the population of P'yongyang was approximately 120,000 persons; on 1 March 1952 the population was approximately 150,000 persons.
2. On 15 May 1952 most of the 200,000 persons living in P'yongyang had evacuated from the central sector to the western sector of the city. Approximately 30 percent of the city's total population were government employees.
3. In June 1952 persons from rural areas who had sufficient income were moving into P'yongyang, which was considered relatively safe because of the heavy anti-aircraft protection around the city. Most persons were living in temporary sheds built upon the city's rubble. United Nations bombardment on 14 August 1951 had reduced the city's populace to desperate living conditions.
4. By 22 June 1952 North Korean government controls over the business and social activity of P'yongyang residents had been lightened; these controls were, however, much more strictly enforced in areas other than P'yongyang. Officials had relaxed tax and labor mobilization requirements and regulations concerning attendance at meetings of vocational and cultural groups for residents of P'yongyang.
5. P'yongyang police and security officials were not, as previously, conducting

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house searches without notification.

6. In June boys 17 and 18 years old were required to attend either primary or middle school. Attendance was small, however, because of inadequate income of the parents and a fear of air raids. Men from 19 years of age through 32 years were being conscripted into the army. Persons from 33 years of age through 50 years were required to work for 60 to 90 days each year. Conscript labor was generally sent to Sunan on foot to work in the monazite mines for 20 days. Thirty days, however, were generally necessary before an individual could fulfill his production quota. Mine laborers were receiving food but no reimbursement for travelling expenses.
7. In June women were being required to remove rubble from the city each day and attend propaganda meetings each week.
8. In mid-May North Korean army soldiers were scattered throughout the city to prevent looting by residents.
9. In June loud speakers installed on street poles were broadcasting propaganda between 5:30 a.m. and 11:30 p.m. each day.
10. By 22 June propaganda emphasizing the achievements of the North Korean army had greatly decreased.
11. In June the curfew in P'yongyang was from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m.
12. By 22 June, although the curfew in P'yongyang extended from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m., persons were being permitted on city streets throughout the night.

Economic Conditions and Commodity Price Rise

13. In June the frequency of issue and the amount of grain rations were irregular. Families of persons who fled to the south were denied grain rations. Farmers were placing small amounts of grain on the P'yongyang market to meet heavy taxes, fund campaigns for weapons, and membership dues for the Farmers' Alliance.
14. In June the Karugye market at approximately YD-383257, the market at approximately YD-382248 at Inhung-ni (125-45, 39-03) (YD-3825), the market at approximately YD-382243 at Kirin-ni (125-45, 39-02) (YD-3824), and the Ch'iupung-ni market at approximately YD-386273 were the most active markets in the P'yongyang area.
15. By 22 June officials had not instituted anti-inflation measures to cope with the severe rise in commodity prices between March 1952 and June 1952. Only government employees and industrial workers were receiving food rations. The monthly income necessary for a middle-class family of five persons was approximately 50,000 North Korean won.
16. On 8 March 1952 commodity prices in the P'yongyang area in North Korean won were as follows:

Rice, 10 liters	4,500
Corn, 10 liters	2,000
Dried fish, 20	800

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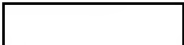
Cotton cloth, 1 p'il ²	4,000
Stockings, 1 pair	200
Women's rubber shoes, 1 pair	2,000
Tennis shoes, 1 pair	4,000
Chinese navy cigarettes, 1 package	200
Czechoslovakian army shoes, 1 pair	4,000
North Korean cigarettes, 1 package	100
Tobacco, 1 package	100
Liquor, 4 hop ²	1,000
Beef, 600 grams	1,000
Pork, 600 grams	800
Chicken, 1	8,000

17. On 22 June commodity prices in the P'yongyang area in North Korean won were as follows:

Rice, 9 liters	4,700
Millet, 9 liters	4,700
Barley, 9 liters	4,500
Sorghum, 9 liters	4,000
Eggs, 1 dozen	1,000
Rubber shoes, 1 pair	2,500
Haircut	150
Matches, 1 small box	60
Sneakers, Chinese, 1 pair	3,500
Chinese cigarettes, 1 package	400
Laundry soap, 1 bar	350
North Korean cigarettes, 1 package	400
Socks, 1 pair	350
Sheeting cloth, 1 yard	400
Home-spun cotton, 30 feet	2,000

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Woman's dress, Korean, 1	10,000
Man's suit, Korean, 1	5,000
Streptomycin (U.S. manufacture)	8,000
Penicillin (U.S. manufacture)	2,300
Penicillin (Chinese manufacture)	2,000

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Comment. One p⁴l is 40 yards; one hop is three-tenths of a pint.

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